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Web-Based Recruitment

Effects of Information, Organizational Brand,
and Attitudes Toward a Web Site on Applicant Attraction

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Why This Study Matters

- Recruitment is critical for organizational effectiveness
- Early attraction shapes applicant pool quality
- Over 90% of large U.S. companies use websites for recruitment
- But what actually drives attraction online?



Recruitment as a Decision Process

- Early stage = generating applicants
- Job seekers form “consideration sets”
- Limited information shapes early favorites
- First impressions matter



Theoretical Foundations

- Signaling Theory
- Brand Equity Theory
- Recruitment Source Effects
- Theory of Reasoned Action



Key Variables Studied

Before Website Exposure

- Organizational Familiarity
- Organizational Image

After Website Exposure

- Job Information
- Organization Information
- Attitude Toward Website
- Attitude Toward Organization
- Intentions to Pursue Employment

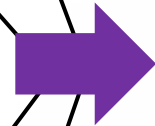


FAMILIARITY

IMAGE

JOB INFO

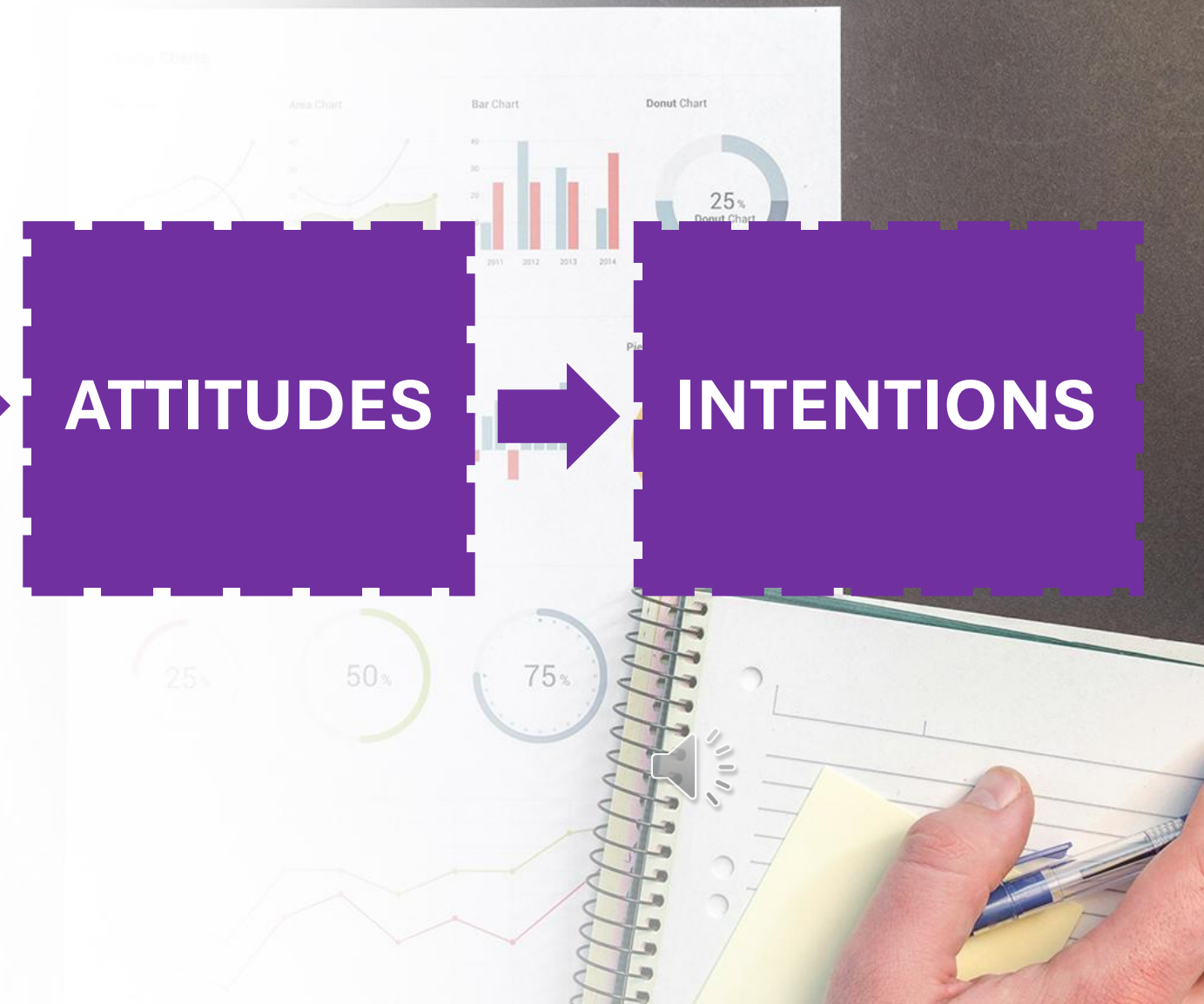
ORG INFO



ATTITUDES



INTENTIONS



Hypotheses

More job information → greater attraction

More organization information → greater attraction

Stronger image → greater attraction

Positive website attitude → greater attraction

Attitudes mediate effects on intentions



Method

- 814 business students
- Randomly assigned to 73 real Fortune 500 websites
- Pre-test → Website browsing → Post-test
- Average browsing time: 7.76 minutes



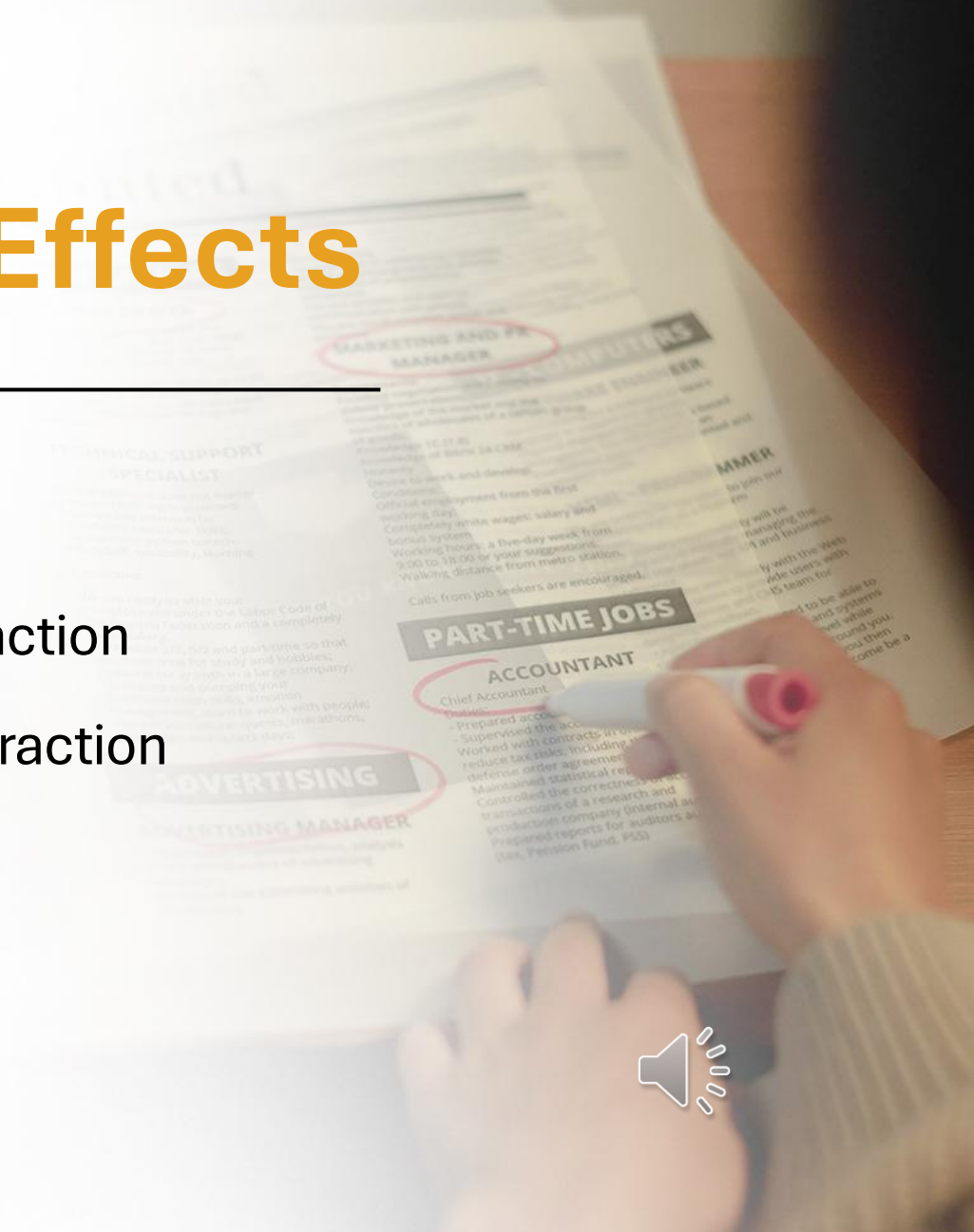
Key Findings: Information

- ✓ Organization information → increased organizational attitude
- ✓ Job information → increased website attitude
- ✓ Job information → directly influenced intentions



Key Findings: Brand Effects

- ✓ Organizational image strongly predicted attraction
- ✗ Organizational familiarity did NOT predict attraction



Website Attitude Matters

- ✓ Attitude toward website strongly influenced organizational attitude
- ✓ Website perceptions partially mediated information effects



Mediation Results

- Attitudes toward organization → predicted intentions
- Image and organization info → indirect effects via attitude
- Job information → partial direct effect



Practical Implications

Organizations should:

- Provide substantial organization-level information
- Ensure high-quality website design
- Invest in brand image development
- Go beyond name recognition



Theoretical Contributions

- Integrates signaling and brand equity theory
- Demonstrates mediated process model
- Uses real organizational websites
- Extends recruitment source research



Limitations & Future Research

- Student sample
- Fortune 500 organizations only
- Cross-sectional design
- No long-term hiring outcomes measured



Final Takeaways

- Information matters
- Image matters more than familiarity
- Website experience shapes attraction
- Attitudes drive intentions



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